

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**Governor Quinn Announces Appointments to Workers' Compensation Advisory Board**  
*Appointments Continue Implementation of Workers' Compensation Reform Law*

**CHICAGO** – July 20, 2011. Governor Pat Quinn today announced 12 appointments to the Workers' Compensation Advisory Board. Today's action continues implementation of the historic workers' compensation reforms signed into law by the Governor last month. The Advisory Board will make recommendations on the appointment of arbitrators, among other duties.

Effective immediately, Governor Quinn named Mitchell W. Abbett, Richard Aleksy, Aaron Anderson, Michael Carrigan, John Carpenter, Mark Denzler, Phillip Gruber, David Halffield, William Lowry, Mark Prince, Sean T. Stott and David Vite to serve as members of the Workers' Compensation Advisory Board.

"Each of these appointees brings the knowledge and experience to support us in reforming Illinois' workers' compensation system," said Governor Quinn. "Our efforts to overhaul and modernize workers' compensation are critical to improving our state's business climate. I want to thank these individuals for their commitment to our businesses and our workers, and I look forward to the board's recommendations."

In June, Governor Quinn signed House Bill 1698, a comprehensive overhaul of Illinois' workers' compensation system. The reforms are expected to save Illinois businesses between \$500 and \$750 million dollars, while continuing protections for injured workers. The reform package also includes a major overhaul of Illinois' troubled Workers' Compensation Commission.

In addition to making arbitrator recommendations, the Workers' Compensation Advisory Board also assists the Illinois Workers' Compensation Commission (IWCC) in formulating policies, setting priorities and developing administrative goals. The chairman of the IWCC serves as the ex officio chairman of the Advisory Board.

The Advisory Board consists of 12 members appointed by the Governor with the advice and consent of the Senate. Members are unpaid, but may have expenses reimbursed. Six board members represent employees, and six represent employers; the structure is designed to balance the concerns of businesses, while continuing critical protections for workers.

Profiles of the new Advisory Board members are below:

Mitchell Abbett has over 20 years of experience in workers' compensation, human resources, and in developing successful policies concerning health and safety in the workforce. Mr. Abbett is currently the human resources and safety manager at Holten Meat Inc. Previously he worked as safety and training manager at The P.D. George Company, director of safety and insurance for the city of Granite City, a claims adjuster for Crawford Company and a personnel safety coordinator at Lanter Courier Corporation.

Richard Aleksy is a partner at Corti, Aleksy & Castaneda, P.C. Mr. Alesky has served as president and director of the Workers' Compensation Lawyers Association, and has been published extensively on workers' compensation law.

Aaron Anderson has been an employee-class representative for the Illinois Workers' Compensation Commission Advisory Board since 2009. He is currently the director and representative for the Painters District Council No. 30 in Aurora. Mr. Anderson has health and safety certifications from a number of organization including, the International Union of Painters and Allied Trades, U.S. Environmental Agency, the American Red Cross and OSHA.

Michael Carrigan is the president of the Illinois AFL-CIO. Mr. Carrigan brings 30 years of experience

with labor organizations, and first-hand knowledge of injured workers' experiences within the workers' compensation system. He has served on the Illinois Workers' Compensation Commission Advisory Board since 2005.

John Carpenter is the senior vice president of public policy for the Chicagoland Chamber of Commerce. Mr. Carpenter's extensive business background includes work as vice president of corporate affairs for American Airlines, served on the boards of Fort Worth Chamber of Commerce, the Dallas Convention and Visitors Bureau, the Midwest Board of Directors of the National Conference of Community & Justice, and the Board of Directors of the World Affairs Councils of America.

Mark Denzler is currently the vice president and chief operating officer at the Illinois Manufacturers' Association. Mr. Denzler has also served the association's Illinois government affairs specialist, director of government affairs, and a legislative analyst.

David Halffield is the vice president of Sears Holdings Management Corporation and specializes in overseeing risk management and workers compensation claims. Mr. Halffield has also had past experience as the assistant director of casualty claims services at the Midwest Region of Aon Risk Services, a claims insurance manager at Chicago Bridge and Iron and he was a claims adjuster and supervisor at Liberty Mutual Insurance Company.

Phillip Gruber is the general vice president for the International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers Union. Mr. Gruber has been a member of the International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers Union Local Lodge 688 since 1972, and has served on the Workers' Compensation Advisory Board since 2007.

William Lowry is a managing shareholder at Nyhan, Bambrick, Kinzie and Lowry, PC. He is a member of the Workers' Compensation Lawyers Association, and has concentrations in trial and appellate workers' compensation and employer liability practice. He is the author of several articles on workers' compensation law, and he lectures throughout Illinois.

Mark Prince has been part of the Prince Law Firm in Marion, Illinois since 2004, representing clients that have been harmed on the job due to negligence or intentional misconduct. He has been awarded the William J. Harte award for his amicus curiae briefs, and he has lectured at multiple legal education seminars on the rights of injured people.

Sean Stott has 15 years of experience analyzing the Workers' Compensation Act as the director of governmental affairs for the Laborers' International Union of North America. He has also had prior experience with unions and workers compensation through his position as the legislative director for the Illinois AFL-CIO.

David Vite is currently the president and CEO of the Illinois Retail Merchants Association and has served for two years on the Board of Directors and Executive Committee of the National Retail Federation. He has served on the Employment Security Advisory Board since 1983, where he is the longest serving member.